

THE HONORABLE JOHN C. COUGHENOUR

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

SUMIT GARG,

Defendant.

CASE NO. CR21-0045-JCC

ORDER

This matter comes before the Court on Defendant's various *ex parte* motions related to his standby counsel, paralegal, and computer expert. (Dkt. Nos. 314, 326, 327, 328, 329.) The Court denied Defendant's previous request for additional funds for a paralegal and/or an investigator. (Dkt. No. 292.) Defendant now requests additional funds for paralegal work (Dkt. No. 327) and for a computer expert (Dkt. No. 327).

As a general matter, the Court is not aware of any authority that states a *pro se* defendant is entitled to unlimited funds to prepare his defense. To date, the Court has taken great care to ensure Defendant, who decided to proceed *pro se*, is afforded every opportunity to prepare and present his case. But given the current case posture, Defendant's requests are unreasonable.

As the Court has reiterated numerous times, the pretrial deadline for this case has passed. (*See, e.g.*, Dkt. No. 292.) Defendant may rely on a paralegal to help him prepare for trial, but his current request, including funds for time to perform legal research, finding an investigator, and

1 accessing PACER, is overbroad. (Dkt. No. 327 at 10.) Accordingly, the Court DENIES
2 Defendant's request for funds beyond the amount already authorized. As the trial date
3 approaches, Defendant may re-file a request for additional funds for a paralegal detailing
4 *reasonable* hours necessary for trial preparation, which may include the preparation of trial
5 exhibits.¹

6 Defendant also requests funds for a computer expert. (Dkt. No. 326.) He requests \$7,500
7 for the expert. But Defendant does not explain why an additional computer expert is necessary.
8 (*See id.*) Previous counsel hired a computer expert, who presumably performed a detailed
9 analysis of the devices at issue. Defendant will not be deprived of the opportunity to prepare his
10 case if the Court denies his request for a second expert at this time.

11 Finally, Defendant asks for clarification of the role of standby counsel and paralegal.
12 (Dkt. No. 314.) In deciding to represent himself *pro se*, it is Defendant's responsibility to
13 research and prepare to present his defense. As previously noted, "[s]tandby counsel may
14 respond to [Defendant's] specific requests for legal advice." (Dkt. No. 174 at 4.) Standby counsel
15 may also help Defendant with tasks he is unable to accomplish while incarcerated. (*See, e.g.*,
16 Dkt. No. 231 at 2) (authorizing standby counsel to help Defendant find paralegal and
17 investigative services). Defendant may consult with counsel to determine the exact bounds of the
18 role, in line with these obligations previously set forth by the Court.

19 Accordingly, for the reasons set forth herein, Defendant's motions to appoint a computer
20 expert (Dkt. No. 326) and a paralegal (Dkt. No. 327) are DENIED.

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25 ¹ Defendant requests leave for his paralegal to file exhibits in support of his various motions.
26 (Dkt. Nos. 328, 329.) Even if these exhibits were filed, the Court would still deny the motions
and so the requests to file exhibits are DENIED as moot.

1 DATED this 20th day of March 2023.

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5 John C. Coughenour
6 UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE
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